TNPSC WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

August 1 – 10, 2026

1. NATIONAL NEWS

1.1 Western Ghats Eco-Sensitive Area (ESA) Notification

- Notification issued by: Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) released the final Western Ghats ESA notification covering parts of 6 states.
- States covered: Kerala, Karnataka, Goa, Maharashtra, Gujarat, and **Tamil Nadu** — 56,825 sq km designated as eco-sensitive.
- Restrictions: Mining, quarrying, and large-scale construction are prohibited; regulated zones allow limited activities with prior environmental clearance.
- Significance: Protects the Western Ghats biodiversity hotspot — one of 8 global hotspots, home to over 5,000 flowering plant species.

Learn Basics:

- Eco-Sensitive Area (ESA): Buffer zones around protected areas notified under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 to regulate development activities.
- Western Ghats: UNESCO World Heritage Site running ~1,600 km along India's west coast; listed as a biodiversity hotspot.
- **Exam point of view:** TNPSC often asks which states the Western Ghats ESA covers and the legislation under which ESAs are notified.

1.2 Anti-Paper Leak Bill — Prevention of Unfair Means in Public Examinations Act 2024

- Status: Parliament enacted the Prevention of Unfair Means in Public Examinations Act, 2024; implementation guidelines issued August 2026.
- Punishment: Imprisonment up to **10 years** and fine up to ₹1 crore for leaking question papers.
- Scope: Covers all Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), Staff Selection Commission (SSC), NTA and other central recruitment examinations.
- Nodal ministry: Ministry of Education oversees implementation; states may adopt their own parallel legislation.

Learn Basics:

- Paper leak: Unauthorised disclosure of examination question papers before or during the examination — a major integrity concern in competitive exams.
- NTA (National Testing Agency): Autonomous body under Education Ministry that conducts NEET, JEE, CUET and other national examinations.
- **Exam point of view:** Expect questions on the penalty amounts and the authority that administers implementation.

1.3 India Stack & Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) Expansion

- India Stack: Collection of open APIs and digital platforms — Aadhaar, UPI, DigiLocker, ONDC — enabling paperless, cashless service delivery.
- New initiative: Government announced **Academic Bank of Credits (ABC) + DigiLocker integration** as part of NEP 2020 implementation.

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- ONDC: Open Network for Digital Commerce: decentralised e-commerce protocol to reduce platform monopolies; crosses 10 million daily transactions.
- Global recognition: India's DPI model is being adopted by G20 nations as a template for inclusive digital economies.

Learn Basics:

- UPI (Unified Payments Interface): Real-time inter-bank payment system developed by NPCI; processes billions of transactions monthly.
- DigiLocker: Government cloud-based platform for citizens to store and share certified digital documents (Aadhaar, driving licence, marksheets).
- **Exam point of view:** TNPSC tests the full-form and parent body of each India Stack component — NPCI for UPI, MeitY for DigiLocker, DPIIT for ONDC.

1.4 TRAI Television Rating Policy 2026

- Policy issued by: Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) released revised Television Rating Policy 2026 to reform TRP measurement.
- New requirement: Mandatory **Barometer-based passive measurement** across 50,000 homes replacing earlier active-diary systems.
- Concern addressed: TRP manipulation scandals (2020) — policy mandates independent audit of rating agencies.
- Regulator: TRAI functions under the TRAI Act, 1997; recommendations are advisory for government, binding for telecom/broadcasting operators.

Learn Basics:

- TRP (Television Rating Point): Metric measuring the popularity of a TV channel/programme based on viewership data.
- TRAI: Independent regulatory body that regulates telecom, broadcasting, cable TV services and internet services in India.
- **Exam point of view:** Know TRAI's parent act (1997), its advisory vs. binding powers, and the distinction between broadcasting and telecom regulation.

1.5 MSME Amendment Bill 2026

- Amendment to: Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development (MSMED) Act, 2006 — revised investment and turnover thresholds for classification.
- New thresholds (Medium): Investment limit raised to ₹**50 crore**; annual turnover limit to ₹250 crore to widen the MSME credit net.
- Benefit: More enterprises now qualify for priority sector lending, government procurement quotas, and MSME credit guarantee schemes.
- Ministry: Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises; MSME sector contributes ~30% of India's GDP.

Learn Basics:

- MSME: Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises — backbone of India's economy, employing over 110 million people and comprising 95% of all industrial units.
- Priority Sector Lending (PSL): RBI mandate requiring banks to lend a minimum percentage (40% for domestic banks) to sectors like agriculture, MSMEs, education.

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- **Exam point of view:** Remember the three tiers (Micro/Small/Medium) and their revised investment + turnover ceilings — commonly tested.

1.6 Samudra Manthan Scheme (Fisheries)

- Scheme launched by: Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying to modernise India's fisheries sector.
- Key components: Deep-sea fishing vessel upgradation, **Integrated Fisheries Development Portal**, and cold-chain logistics support to coastal fishers.
- Target: Increase marine fish production to 9.5 million metric tons by 2030 under the Blue Economy vision.
- Alignment: Complements PM Matsya Sampada Yojana (2020) — the flagship fisheries scheme with ₹20,050 crore outlay.

Learn Basics:

- Blue Economy: Sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth including fisheries, shipping, aquaculture, and marine tourism.
- PM Matsya Sampada Yojana: Centrally-sponsored scheme to bring about Blue Revolution through sustainable and responsible development of fisheries sector.
- **Exam point of view:** Distinguish Samudra Manthan (new fisheries modernisation) from PM Matsya Sampada (the 2020 flagship scheme) — both target Blue Economy.

1.7 PM Surya Sarovar Yojana

- Objective: Central scheme to construct and revive water bodies (sarovars/tanks) for irrigation and groundwater recharge.
- Target: Construction and renovation of **75,000 water bodies** across India by March 2027, linked to Amrit Mahotsav.
- Ministry: Jal Shakti Ministry; works with MGNREGS for labour-intensive construction in rural areas.
- State coverage: Priority to water-stressed states: Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh.

Learn Basics:

- Water Table Recharge: Process by which surface water percolates into groundwater aquifers — traditional tanks and ponds are critical for this.
- MGNREGS: Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme — guarantees 100 days of unskilled wage employment to rural households.
- **Exam point of view:** Note the target figure (75,000 bodies), the ministry (Jal Shakti), and its link with Amrit Mahotsav — all are exam favourites.

1.8 PM-KISAN Extension & 20th Installment

- Scheme: Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) — ₹6,000/year direct income support in 3 installments to all land-holding farmers.
- 20th Installment: **₹2,000 per farmer** released to ~9.8 crore farmers on August 5, 2026 via DBT.
- Coverage: Scheme extended to include PM-KISAN Mobile App for e-KYC verification; Aadhaar-linked bank accounts mandatory.

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- Total outlay: Over ₹3.24 lakh crore disbursed since launch in February 2018; Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare.

Learn Basics:

- DBT (Direct Benefit Transfer): Government mechanism to transfer financial benefits directly to beneficiaries' bank accounts, reducing leakages.
- e-KYC: Electronic Know Your Customer — digital identity verification using Aadhaar-based OTP or biometric authentication.
- **Exam point of view:** Remember PM-KISAN gives ₹6,000/year in three equal ₹2,000 installments; launched in 2018; benefits all land-holding farmers including small and marginal.

1.9 DAANVEER Initiative — Corporate Philanthropy Platform

- Launched by: Ministry of Corporate Affairs launched DAANVEER — a National Corporate Philanthropy Platform.
- Purpose: Digital platform enabling companies to **pledge and track CSR contributions** under Companies Act, 2013 (Section 135).
- CSR mandate: Companies with net worth ≥₹500 crore, or turnover ≥₹1,000 crore, or net profit ≥₹5 crore must spend 2% of average net profit on CSR.
- Transparency goal: Platform provides real-time dashboards of CSR spending by sector — education, health, environment, rural development.

Learn Basics:

- CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility): Legally mandated social expenditure by large Indian companies under Section 135 of Companies Act, 2013.
- Companies Act, 2013: Primary legislation governing corporate affairs in India; replaced the older Companies Act, 1956.
- **Exam point of view:** Know the CSR threshold criteria (₹500 cr net worth OR ₹1,000 cr turnover OR ₹5 cr net profit) and the mandatory 2% spend rule.

1.10 Vande Mataram Bill 2026

- Introduced in: Rajya Sabha as Private Member's Bill seeking to make recitation of Vande Mataram mandatory in all government offices weekly.
- Background: Vande Mataram was composed by **Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay** in 1875; adopted as National Song (not Anthem) in 1950.
- Distinction: National Anthem = Jana Gana Mana (Tagore, adopted January 24, 1950); National Song = Vande Mataram (adopted October 24, 1950).
- Status: Bill referred to Parliamentary Standing Committee; constitutional validity debated under Articles 19 and 25.

Learn Basics:

- National Song vs. National Anthem: Vande Mataram (National Song) has no legal obligation to stand; Jana Gana Mana (National Anthem) requires standing under Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971.
- Private Member's Bill: A bill introduced by a member of Parliament who is not a minister — most are never passed but used to raise public debate.

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- **Exam point of view:** Frequently tested: who wrote Vande Mataram, its adoption date vs. Jana Gana Mana, and the distinction between National Song and National Anthem.

1.11 Supreme Court on Green Clearances — Ex Post Facto EC

- SC ruling: Supreme Court reaffirmed ban on ex post facto (post-construction) Environmental Clearances — held unconstitutional under EP Act, 1986.
- Key case reference: Reaffirmed the 2021 ruling in **Common Cause v. Union of India** — ex post facto EC regularises illegal construction, violates rule of law.
- EIA Notification 2006: Requires prior EC for projects above threshold — clearance must be obtained before construction begins, not after.
- Impact: Dozens of projects in ecologically sensitive areas ordered to stop; violators face demolition orders.

Learn Basics:

- Environmental Clearance (EC): Mandatory permission from MoEFCC for development projects (mining, industry, infrastructure) above specified thresholds.
- Ex Post Facto: Latin for 'after the fact' — granting approval retroactively for work already done without permission.
- **Exam point of view:** Remember that ex post facto EC was struck down by SC; EIA Notification is from 2006; and the parent act is Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

1.12 Registration of Births and Deaths (Amendment) Act

- Amendment to: Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969 — amended to create a unified national database of births and deaths.
- Key change: Death certificate is now mandatory for **inheritance, insurance, government service** — linked to Aadhaar; birth certificate is single proof of age.
- Digital registry: Registrar General of India (RGI) to maintain a centralised birth-death database accessible to all states.
- Significance: Eliminates multiple documents for age proof; helps update voter, ration, and other government records automatically.

Learn Basics:

- Registrar General of India (RGI): Statutory body under Census Act managing census, civil registration, and sample registration system.
- Civil Registration System (CRS): Continuous, permanent, compulsory recording of vital events (births, deaths, marriages) mandated under law.
- **Exam point of view:** Note the parent act year (1969), the role of RGI, and why birth certificate replaces multiple age-proof documents.

1.13 One Nation One Fertilizer Scheme (Pradhanmantri Bhartiya Janurvarak Pariyojana)

- Scheme name: Pradhanmantri Bhartiya Janurvarak Pariyojana (PMBJP) — single 'Bharat' branded fertilizer across India.
- Purpose: All subsidised fertilizers sold under one **'Bharat' brand** to eliminate company-specific branding and ensure uniform pricing.
- Subsidy mechanism: Government pays subsidy directly to fertilizer companies; farmers pay a fixed uniform price (e.g., Urea ₹242/50 kg bag).

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- Ministry: Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers; scheme aligns with DBT for fertilizer subsidies from FY 2022–23.

Learn Basics:

- Urea: Most widely used nitrogenous fertilizer in India; highly subsidised under Nutrient-Based Subsidy (NBS) scheme.
- Bharat Brand: Government-unified branding for essential commodities (Bharat rice, Bharat atta, Bharat dal) to ensure price stability.
- **Exam point of view:** Remember PMBJP — One Nation One Fertilizer — under Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers; fixed retail price for urea (₹242/50 kg bag) is frequently tested.

1.14 India's Second Deep Submergence Vehicle (DSV) — NPIUN

- Name: NPIUN — India's second indigenously developed Deep Submergence Vehicle launched by DRDO and Navy.
- Capability: Can dive up to **1,000 metres** depth for submarine rescue, reconnaissance, and seabed survey operations.
- First DSV: DSRV (Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicle) — India's first, inducted in 2018 for submarine rescue up to 650 m.
- Significance: Critical for rescuing submariners in distress; part of India's underwater warfare expansion under DRDO + Indian Navy.

Learn Basics:

- DSV (Deep Submergence Vehicle): Specialised vessel capable of operating at extreme ocean depths for rescue, survey, or combat missions.
- DRDO: Defence Research and Development Organisation — India's defence R&D body under Ministry of Defence.
- **Exam point of view:** Distinguish between DSRV (1st, 2018, rescue vehicle) and NPIUN (2nd, 2026); also remember DRDO is the developer.

1.15 First Department of Military Medicine — Lucknow

- Established at: King George's Medical University (KGMU), Lucknow — first Department of Military Medicine in India.
- Purpose: Trains civilian doctors in **combat medicine, trauma care, mass casualty management** — bridge between armed forces and civilian healthcare.
- MoU signed: Between Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Health & Family Welfare for joint faculty and curriculum development.
- Significance: Enhances civilian surge capacity during national emergencies and strengthens civil-military healthcare cooperation.

Learn Basics:

- Military Medicine: Medical discipline focused on injuries and diseases arising in military operations — trauma surgery, NBC (nuclear-biological-chemical) medicine.
- KGMU: King George's Medical University, Lucknow — premier medical institution in Uttar Pradesh; established 1905.
- **Exam point of view:** Remember this is India's FIRST such department, located at KGMU Lucknow — 'first' institutions are consistently tested.

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1.16 IASV Tarini — Indian All-women Crew Circumnavigation (Operation Trishul)

- Operation: Operation Trishul — Indian Navy all-women crew aboard INSV Tarini completing second global circumnavigation.
- Vessel: INSV Tarini — indigenously built steel-hulled sailing vessel; first circumnavigation completed **2017–18 under Operation Samudra Shakti**.
- Significance: Promotes women empowerment in Indian Navy; demonstrates India's blue-water sailing capabilities.
- Navy's role: Crew are commissioned Navy officers; voyage covers major oceans including Southern Ocean (roughest seas).

Learn Basics:

- Circumnavigation: Voyage around the entire Earth — typically following an unbroken route across all major oceans.
- INSV (Indian Naval Sailing Vessel): Category of sailing vessels used by the Indian Navy for adventure training and capacity-building.
- **Exam point of view:** First circumnavigation (2017–18) = Operation Samudra Shakti; second = Operation Trishul — keep these linked for exam answers.

1.17 e-Zero FIR System — National Launch

- Initiative: Ministry of Home Affairs launched e-Zero FIR — online FIR registration for cognizable offences without attending police stations.
- Coverage: Available in all states via **CCTNS (Crime and Criminal Tracking Network & Systems)** portal integrated with eCourts.
- Legal basis: CrPC Section 154 (now BNSS 2023 equivalent) mandates police to register FIR for cognizable offences; e-Zero FIR enforces compliance.
- Benefit: Prevents refusal of FIR registration; timestamp-sealed; auto-assigned to jurisdiction for investigation.

Learn Basics:

- FIR (First Information Report): Official document prepared by police when they receive information about a cognizable offence — triggers the investigation process.
- Cognizable Offence: Crime for which police can arrest without warrant and investigate without court permission (e.g., murder, rape, robbery).
- **Exam point of view:** Note the distinction: Zero FIR (filed at any station, transferred to jurisdiction); e-Zero FIR adds digital layer — TNPSC asks on CCTNS and its integration.

1.18 Bharat Maritime Insurance Pool (BMIP)

- Established by: Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways — India's first war-risk marine insurance pool.
- Purpose: Provides insurance cover to Indian-flagged ships in **high-risk zones (Red Sea, Persian Gulf)** — reduces dependence on foreign insurers.
- Corpus: Initial corpus of ₹500 crore; managed jointly by GIC Re and Indian P&I Club.
- Context: Red Sea crisis (2023-onwards) — Houthi attacks drove war-risk premiums up 300%; Indian vessels were paying heavy foreign premiums.

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Learn Basics:

- Marine Insurance: Insurance covering ships, cargo, and maritime liability — essential for international trade; governed by Marine Insurance Act, 1963.
- GIC Re: General Insurance Corporation of India — India's sole national reinsurer; provides reinsurance to all general insurance companies.
- **Exam point of view:** Remember BMIP = India's FIRST war-risk marine pool; Red Sea crisis motivation; ₹500 crore corpus; GIC Re is the reinsurer.

2. TAMIL NADU NEWS

2.1 Tamil Nadu Patient Safety Governance Framework

- Framework launched by: Tamil Nadu Health Department — Patient Safety Governance Framework for all government hospitals.
- Components: Mandatory **Adverse Event Reporting System**, root-cause analysis committees, and patient safety officer in each district hospital.
- Model: Aligned with WHO Global Patient Safety Action Plan 2021–2030; Tamil Nadu is first state to adopt state-wide governance framework.
- Significance: Reduces preventable medical errors — WHO estimates 134 million adverse events/year in developing countries.

Learn Basics:

- Patient Safety: Prevention of errors and adverse effects to patients associated with healthcare — one of WHO's 13 flagship areas under the Global Patient Safety Action Plan.
- Adverse Event: Unintended injury or harm to a patient that occurs as a result of healthcare management rather than the underlying disease.
- **Exam point of view:** Tamil Nadu as first state for this framework; alignment with WHO 2021–2030 plan; distinction between adverse event (harm) and sentinel event (death) will be tested.

2.2 El Niño Expert Advisory Committee — Tamil Nadu

- Constituted by: Government of Tamil Nadu constituted an El Niño Expert Advisory Committee to prepare drought mitigation strategies.
- Context: IMD forecast of **below-normal southwest monsoon (SWM)** over Tamil Nadu due to lingering El Niño effects.
- Committee mandate: Monitor rainfall deficits, advise on crop alternatives (rainfed millets), and coordinate water-release from Mettur and Stanley reservoir.
- Impact on kuruvai: Kuruvai (short-duration paddy) area declined significantly due to water shortage in the Cauvery delta.

Learn Basics:

- El Niño: Periodic warming of central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean — causes deficit monsoon in India, drought in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh; usually follows La Niña.
- Southwest Monsoon (SWM): Primary monsoon in India (June–September) carrying ~75% of India's annual rainfall; failure linked to El Niño years.
- **Exam point of view:** TNPSC regularly tests El Niño vs La Niña effects on Indian monsoon; the Kuruvai crop link to Cauvery water availability is a Tamil Nadu-specific angle.

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2.3 Cauvery Water Dispute — 3,500 Cusecs Order

- Order by: Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA) directed Karnataka to release 3,500 cusecs of water to Tamil Nadu.
- Legal framework: Under **Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal (CWDT) Final Award 2007** — Tamil Nadu's allocated share: 419 TMC annually.
- Reservoir status: Mettur dam at 50-year record low in July 2026 — SWM failure reduced inflows to Cauvery from Karnataka catchment.
- CWMA role: Permanent authority constituted by SC order in 2018 to monitor and enforce CWDT award; replaces ad hoc Cauvery River Authority.

Learn Basics:

- Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal (CWDT): Established 1990 under Inter-State River Water Disputes Act, 1956; final award issued 2007.
- TMC (Thousand Million Cubic Feet): Unit of water volume used in inter-state river water disputes; 1 TMC ≈ 28.317 billion litres.
- **Exam point of view:** CWDT award year (2007), TN allocation (419 TMC), CWMA constitution (2018) — all three are standard exam data points on this dispute.

2.4 Tamil Nadu Singapengal Entrepreneurship Credit Scheme

- Scheme for: Women entrepreneurs in Tamil Nadu — interest subvention and collateral-free credit up to ₹1 lakh for micro-enterprises.
- Expanded coverage: August 2026: coverage extended to **SC/ST women, transgender, and differently-abled women** entrepreneurs — enhanced subsidy of 6%.
- Implementing body: Tamil Nadu Corporation for Development of Women (TNCDW) in coordination with Tamil Nadu Small Industries Development Corporation (TANSIDCO).
- Goal: Increase women's economic participation in micro-enterprise sector; aligned with SHG-bank linkage model.

Learn Basics:

- SHG (Self-Help Group): Small informal association of 10–20 women who save regularly and access credit — backbone of women's microfinance in Tamil Nadu.
- TNCDW: Tamil Nadu Corporation for Development of Women — nodal agency for women welfare schemes in the state.
- **Exam point of view:** Know implementing body (TNCDW), maximum loan (₹1 lakh), and the expanded categories (SC/ST women, transgender) added in 2026.

2.5 Tamil Nadu Budget 2026–27 — Key Highlights

- Budget size: Total expenditure of **₹3.57 lakh crore** — largest ever TN budget; presented by Finance Minister Thangam Thennarasu.
- Capital expenditure: ₹70,000 crore for capital investments — focus on infrastructure: roads, ports, renewable energy, and urban mobility.
- Social sector: Education (₹42,000 crore), Health (₹22,000 crore), Women Welfare (₹15,000 crore) among top allocations.
- New schemes: Arivagam AI City (Chennai), Environmental and Social Welfare Cess on Liquor, Namakkal Kavignar Maaligai — all announced in Budget 2026–27.

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Budget Parameter	Amount / Detail
Total Expenditure	₹3.57 lakh crore
Capital Expenditure	₹70,000 crore
Education Allocation	₹42,000 crore
Health Allocation	₹22,000 crore

Learn Basics:

- State Budget: Annual financial statement (Article 202 of Constitution) presented by state Finance Minister detailing revenue and expenditure for the coming year.
- Capital vs. Revenue Expenditure: Capital expenditure creates assets (roads, buildings); revenue expenditure covers recurring costs (salaries, subsidies).
- **Exam point of view:** The total budget figure (₹3.57 lakh crore) and Finance Minister's name (Thangam Thennarasu) are standard data points — also remember it's the largest-ever TN budget.

2.6 Arivagam AI City — Chennai

- Announced in: Tamil Nadu Budget 2026–27 — Arivagam AI City to be developed near Chennai as India's first dedicated AI township.
- Area: To be built over **150 acres** in Sholinganallur-Perungudi IT corridor with ₹2,000 crore seed investment.
- Components: AI research labs, start-up incubators, data centres, skilling hubs — co-developed with NASSCOM and TIDCO.
- Context: Part of Tamil Nadu's bid to attract global AI firms; state already hosts 30% of India's IT exports.

Learn Basics:

- AI (Artificial Intelligence): Simulation of human intelligence processes by computer systems — includes machine learning, natural language processing, robotics.
- TIDCO: Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Corporation — state body promoting and facilitating industrial investment in Tamil Nadu.
- **Exam point of view:** Arivagam = Tamil Nadu's first AI city; located near Chennai (Sholinganallur); 150 acres; announced in Budget 2026–27.

2.7 First Mangrove Conservation Centre — Cuddalore

- Established at: Pichavaram, Cuddalore district — India's second-largest mangrove forest (1,100 hectares) hosts Tamil Nadu's first Mangrove Conservation Centre.
- Functions: Seed bank, nursery, research, and **eco-tourism development** — promotes mangrove restoration along Tamil Nadu's 1,076 km coastline.
- Mandate: Under Tamil Nadu Forest Department in collaboration with Wildlife Institute of India (WII) to restore degraded mangroves.
- Importance of mangroves: Coastal buffer against cyclones and tsunamis, nursery for marine fish, carbon sink — Tamil Nadu lost 40% of mangroves since 1990.

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Learn Basics:

- Mangroves: Salt-tolerant trees and shrubs that grow in coastal intertidal zones — provide coastal protection, biodiversity habitat, and act as blue carbon sinks.
- Pichavaram: Tamil Nadu's famous backwater mangrove forest near Chidambaram; among the world's largest mangrove habitats.
- **Exam point of view:** Pichavaram location (Cuddalore), India's second-largest mangrove status, and Tamil Nadu's coastline length (1,076 km) are all testable facts.

2.8 Best State for Organ Donation — Tamil Nadu

- Award received: Tamil Nadu received National Best State Award for Organ Donation 2025 for highest deceased donor rate in India.
- Record: Tamil Nadu achieved **7.42 deceased donors per million population (PMP)** — national average is 0.65 PMP.
- Policy driver: TRANSTAN (Tamil Nadu Transplant Authority) and 'MOHAN Foundation' network facilitate cadaveric organ retrieval and allocation.
- Indian Organ Donation Day: Observed on August 3 (first AIIMS heart transplant, 1994) — Tamil Nadu's success promoted as national model.

Learn Basics:

- Cadaveric/Deceased Donor Transplant: Organ retrieved from a brain-dead person — regulated by Transplantation of Human Organs and Tissues Act, 1994.
- TRANSTAN: Tamil Nadu Transplant Authority — state body managing organ donation, waiting lists, and transplant coordination.
- **Exam point of view:** Tamil Nadu's organ donation rate (7.42 PMP vs national 0.65 PMP) and Indian Organ Donation Day (August 3) are high-frequency TNPSC data points.

3. INTERNATIONAL NEWS

3.1 Nauru Renamed to Naoero

- Renamed by: Republic of Nauru officially changed its English name to Naoero — the indigenous Nauruan spelling.
- Location: Naoero (Nauru) is the world's **smallest island nation and smallest republic** — located in Micronesia, Pacific Ocean; area: 21 sq km.
- Diplomatic context: Country had switched diplomatic recognition to Taiwan (2024), then back to China — Chinese-English name alignment may be linked.
- Capital: Yaren (de facto capital — no official capital); Naoero is also the world's least-populated UN member state.

Learn Basics:

- Micronesia: Pacific Ocean region of thousands of small islands including Nauru, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, and Palau.
- Smallest Republic: Nauru/Naoero — 21 sq km, ~12,000 population; Vatican City is smaller overall but is a theocratic state, not a republic.
- **Exam point of view:** TNPSC tests geographic facts about smallest nations — Nauru = world's smallest island nation AND smallest republic; location = Micronesia, Pacific.

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3.2 Venezuela Withdraws from International Criminal Court (ICC)

- Action taken: Venezuela formally withdrew from the International Criminal Court under Article 127 of the Rome Statute — withdrawal effective 12 months after notification.
- Context: ICC had opened preliminary investigations into **Venezuelan government's alleged crimes against humanity** (2017 post-election crackdown).
- Earlier withdrawal: Philippines withdrew in 2019 after ICC probe into drug war; both are the only ICC member-states to have withdrawn.
- ICC basics: Established by Rome Statute 1998, operational 2002; 124 member states; headquarters: The Hague, Netherlands.

Learn Basics:

- ICC (International Criminal Court): First permanent international court for individuals accused of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes; distinct from ICJ (which handles state disputes).
- Rome Statute: Foundational treaty of the ICC, adopted 1998, entered into force 2002; Article 127 governs withdrawal.
- **Exam point of view:** ICC (individuals) vs ICJ (states) — most-tested distinction; Rome Statute year (1998); operational year (2002); HQ (The Hague).

3.3 IEA Electricity Mid-Year Update 2026

- Report by: International Energy Agency (IEA) — Electricity Mid-Year Update 2026 tracking global electricity supply and demand.
- Key finding: Global electricity demand grew **4.3% in H1 2026** — fastest growth in a decade, driven by AI data centres and EV adoption.
- India data: India's electricity demand grew 8.1% — highest among G20 nations; renewables share reached 22% of generation.
- IEA founded: 1974 after oil crisis; headquartered in Paris; 31 member countries (India is associate member since 2017, full member from 2024).

Learn Basics:

- IEA (International Energy Agency): Intergovernmental organisation ensuring reliable, affordable, and clean energy — tracks global energy trends and sets policy guidelines.
- Renewable Energy: Energy from naturally replenished sources (solar, wind, hydro, biomass, geothermal) — India targeting 500 GW by 2030.
- **Exam point of view:** IEA HQ (Paris), India's associate membership year (2017) and full membership (2024), and the 500 GW renewable target are exam staples.

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3.4 BRICS Ministerial Meetings — Hyderabad and Jaipur

- Anti-Corruption meeting: BRICS Anti-Corruption Working Group meeting held in Hyderabad — India chairs BRICS 2026; focus on asset recovery.
- Trade Ministers: BRICS Trade Ministers met in Jaipur; discussed **de-dollarisation, BRICS payment system**, and new trade corridors.
- Industry Ministers: BRICS Industry Ministers' meeting in Jaipur addressed supply chain resilience and critical mineral access.
- BRICS 2026 chair: India holds BRICS 2026 chairmanship — summit scheduled in New Delhi; expanded BRICS now has 10 full members.

BRICS Meeting	Location
Anti-Corruption Working Group	Hyderabad
Trade Ministers' Meeting	Jaipur
Industry Ministers' Meeting	Jaipur
BRICS 2026 Summit	New Delhi (upcoming)

Learn Basics:

- BRICS: Group of emerging economies — Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa; expanded in 2024 to add Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, UAE, and Saudi Arabia (10 members).
- De-dollarisation: Movement to reduce reliance on US dollar in international trade and reserves — BRICS promoting trade in local currencies.
- **Exam point of view:** India's BRICS 2026 chairmanship, meeting locations (Hyderabad/Jaipur), and expanded BRICS membership count (10) are all exam-ready facts.

3.5 Multinational Maritime Defence Alliance — Gulf Region

- Alliance formed: Saudi Arabia led formation of a Multinational Maritime Defence Alliance with 13 countries for Red Sea and Gulf of Aden security.
- Motivation: Houthi attacks on commercial shipping since late 2023 — **over 100 vessels attacked**, severely disrupting Suez Canal trade routes.
- India's participation: India has been part of multi-nation naval coalition through Operation Sankalp — deployed INS warships for escort duties.
- Economic impact: Red Sea disruption added 10–14 days to Asia-Europe shipping via Cape of Good Hope route; insurance premiums surged.

Learn Basics:

- Houthis: Yemeni armed group (Ansar Allah) controlling northwest Yemen; have targeted commercial shipping in Red Sea and Gulf of Aden since Gaza war began.
- Suez Canal: Artificial canal in Egypt connecting Mediterranean Sea to Red Sea; handles ~12–15% of global trade; opened 1869.
- **Exam point of view:** Operation Sankalp = India's anti-piracy operation in Gulf of Aden; Suez Canal's trade share (12–15%) and construction year (1869) are tested frequently.

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4. ENVIRONMENT NEWS

4.1 Tigers Outside Tiger Reserves (TOTR) — New Data

- Report by: National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) — Tigers Outside Tiger Reserves (TOTR) data released as part of India Tiger Estimation 2026.
- Key finding: India's total tiger population: **3,862** tigers (2026) — up from 3,167 (2022); ~40% live outside protected areas.
- Significance: TOTR face highest human-wildlife conflict risk; NTCA issued TOTR conservation guidelines including forest corridor protection.
- States with most TOTR: Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu report highest tigers outside reserve boundaries.

Learn Basics:

- Project Tiger: Launched 1973 under Wildlife Protection Act — India's flagship tiger conservation program; today 55+ Tiger Reserves spread across 22 states.
- NTCA (National Tiger Conservation Authority): Statutory body under Ministry of Environment; constituted under Wildlife Protection Act (amendment 2006).
- **Exam point of view:** Latest tiger count (3,862 in 2026), TOTR percentage (~40%), and number of Tiger Reserves (55+) — all three are exam-critical figures.

4.2 Nilgiri Tahr — New Habitat Discovery

- Discovery: Wildlife researchers identified a new population of Nilgiri Tahr in the Anamalai Hills (Kerala-Tamil Nadu border) — outside known survey zones.
- Status: Nilgiri Tahr (Nilgiritragus hylocrius) — **Endangered (IUCN)**; only ~3,500 individuals remain; State Animal of Tamil Nadu.
- Habitat: Restricted to shola-grassland ecosystems of the Western Ghats — found in Eravikulam NP (highest density), Mukurthi NP, Anamalai Tiger Reserve.
- Project Nilgiri Tahr: Project Nilgiri Tahr launched 2022 — India's third species-specific recovery project (after Project Tiger and Project Elephant).

Learn Basics:

- Nilgiri Tahr: Ibex-like ungulate endemic to the Nilgiri Hills and Western Ghats — Tamil Nadu's State Animal; symbol on Tamil Nadu government seal.
- Shola-grassland: Unique high-altitude montane ecosystem of South India — patches of stunted tropical forest (shola) amid rolling grasslands.
- **Exam point of view:** Tamil Nadu State Animal = Nilgiri Tahr; IUCN status = Endangered; highest population = Eravikulam National Park (Kerala); Project Nilgiri Tahr = 2022.

4.3 Houbara Bustard — Conservation Satellite Tracking

- Project by: Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) + Uzbekistan — satellite tagging of Houbara Bustards to track migration routes.
- Migration route: Houbara Bustards migrate from **Central Asia (Uzbekistan/Kazakhstan) to Rajasthan/Gujarat (winter)** — journey of over 3,000 km.
- IUCN status: Vulnerable (IUCN) — threatened by illegal hunting, especially in Gulf countries where it is considered a trophy bird.
- India's protection: Schedule I of Wildlife Protection Act 1972 — provides highest level of protection; hunting is banned.

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Learn Basics:

- BNHS (Bombay Natural History Society): Founded 1883 — India's premier wildlife research organisation; publishes Journal of BNHS.
- Schedule I, Wildlife Protection Act 1972: Provides absolute protection to listed species — hunting and trade strictly prohibited; offences attract highest penalties.
- **Exam point of view:** Houbara Bustard: Vulnerable (IUCN), Schedule I (WPA 1972), migrates to Rajasthan/Gujarat in winter from Central Asia — all three facts are tested.

4.4 Methane Emissions from Paddy Fields — India

- Report finding: FAO and ICAR study: India's paddy fields contribute ~6% of global methane emissions — second only to China.
- Mitigation approach: Alternate Wetting and Drying (AWD) technique reduces paddy methane by **40–70%** while saving 15–30% irrigation water.
- Government response: India included paddy-methane reduction in its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) update under Paris Agreement.
- Significance: Methane has Global Warming Potential (GWP) of 84 over 20 years and 28 over 100 years — far more potent than CO_2.

Learn Basics:

- Methane (CH_4): Potent greenhouse gas — 28x more warming than CO_2 over 100 years; agriculture (livestock + paddy) is major source along with natural gas leaks.
- AWD (Alternate Wetting and Drying): Climate-smart paddy cultivation technique — periodically allows soil to dry, reducing anaerobic decomposition that produces methane.
- **Exam point of view:** AWD reduces methane 40–70%; methane GWP = 28 (100-year) / 84 (20-year); India second-highest paddy methane emitter after China — three distinct exam angles.

4.5 New Catfish Species — Pseudolaguvia khairii (Odisha)

- Discovered in: Baitarani River, Odisha — new freshwater catfish species Pseudolaguvia khairii described by ZSI scientists.
- Significance: Adds to India's freshwater fish biodiversity — India ranks **4th globally in freshwater fish diversity** with over 900 species.
- Family: Sisoridae (torrent catfish) — genus Pseudolaguvia consists of small, stream-adapted catfish endemic to Northeast and East India.
- Naming: Named after renowned ichthyologist Dr. Khairu — recognition for contributions to Indian freshwater fish taxonomy.

Learn Basics:

- ZSI (Zoological Survey of India): India's premier zoological research institution under MoEFCC; established 1916; headquartered in Kolkata; discovers new species regularly.
- Ichthyology: Branch of zoology dealing with the study of fish — taxonomy, ecology, physiology of freshwater and marine fish.
- **Exam point of view:** ZSI = Zoological Survey of India; headquarters = Kolkata; India = 4th in freshwater fish diversity — these are standard ZSI exam facts.

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4.6 Environmental Performance Index (EPI) 2026 — India Ranked 176th

- Report by: Yale University and Columbia University — EPI 2026 released; India ranked 176th out of 180 countries.
- India's scores: Low scores in **Air Quality (AQI), Wastewater Treatment, Biodiversity & Habitat** — India's score: 18.9/100.
- Top performers: Denmark (1st), Luxembourg (2nd), Sweden (3rd) — Nordic nations lead; bottom ranked: Pakistan, Myanmar, Vietnam.
- India's response: Government disputes EPI methodology — says index doesn't account for development needs; cites India's renewable energy growth.

EPI 2026	Details
India's Rank	176 out of 180
India's Score	18.9 / 100
Top Country	Denmark
Poorest Parameter	Air Quality

Learn Basics:

- EPI (Environmental Performance Index): Biennial index by Yale and Columbia Universities measuring country-level environmental performance across 11 categories including air quality, biodiversity, and climate.
- AQI (Air Quality Index): Scale measuring how clean or polluted the air is; India's major cities regularly exceed 'Hazardous' AQI thresholds.
- **Exam point of view:** EPI 2026: India 176/180; Denmark tops; Yale + Columbia publish it — all three facts tested; India's dispute with methodology is also a topic.

4.7 Pygmy Hog — Conservation Reintroduction Update

- Species: Pygmy Hog (Porcula salvania) — world's smallest wild pig; declared Critically Endangered (IUCN).
- Reintroduction: Over **200 individuals reintroduced into Manas National Park** and Sonai Rupai Wildlife Sanctuary (Assam) since 1996 breeding programme.
- Breeding centre: Pygmy Hog Conservation Programme — captive breeding at Guwahati; partnership between Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust and Forest Department, Assam.
- Habitat: Tall alluvial grasslands (terai-duars) of Himalayan foothills — same grasslands as one-horned rhino and Bengal florican.

Learn Basics:

- Pygmy Hog: World's smallest and rarest wild pig; endemic to Himalayan foothills grasslands of Assam; once found across terai belt from Nepal to Bhutan.
- Manas National Park: UNESCO World Heritage Site and Tiger Reserve in Assam — a hotspot for grassland species including pygmy hog, golden langur, and wild buffalo.
- **Exam point of view:** Pygmy hog = world's smallest pig; Critically Endangered (IUCN); reintroduction in Manas NP, Assam; partner = Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust.

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4.8 Glaw Lake — 101st Ramsar Wetland Site of India

- Designated: Glaw Lake (Manipur) declared as India's 101st Ramsar Site — one of the highest density of Ramsar sites globally.
- Significance: India now has **101 Ramsar sites** — most in Asia; total Ramsar wetland area: 1.35 million hectares.
- Ramsar Convention: Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (1971) — India a party since 1982.
- Previous milestone: Manipur's Loktak Lake was India's 1st Ramsar Site (1990) — Glaw Lake adds to the state's wetland conservation profile.

Learn Basics:

- Ramsar Convention: International treaty for wetland conservation and wise use — named after Ramsar, Iran where it was signed in 1971; entered into force 1975.
- Wetlands: Areas where water covers the soil or is near the surface permanently or seasonally — include swamps, lakes, mangroves, coral reefs, and paddy fields.
- **Exam point of view:** India's current Ramsar count (101), India's membership year (1982), and location of 101st site (Glaw Lake, Manipur) — expect all three in exam.

4.9 Clouded Leopard Conservation Action Plan

- Plan released by: MoEFCC and Wildlife Institute of India (WII) — India's first dedicated Clouded Leopard Conservation Action Plan.
- Status: Clouded Leopard (Neofelis nebulosa) — **Vulnerable (IUCN)**; Schedule I (Wildlife Protection Act); found in Northeast India, Himalayan foothills.
- International Clouded Leopard Day: Observed annually on August 4 — aligns with plan release.
- Threats: Habitat loss (deforestation), poaching for fur and bones, road kills; less than 10,000 individuals estimated globally.

Learn Basics:

- Clouded Leopard: Arboreal wild cat of Southeast Asia and Northeast India — known for its distinctively large cloud-shaped spots; named 'State Animal' of Meghalaya and Mizoram.
- WII (Wildlife Institute of India): Autonomous institution under MoEFCC, Dehradun; India's premier wildlife research and training centre.
- **Exam point of view:** Clouded Leopard: State Animal of Meghalaya AND Mizoram; Vulnerable (IUCN); Schedule I; International Day = August 4; WII releases action plans.

5. SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

5.1 IN-SPACe Space Object Re-entry Rules 2026

- Rules issued by: Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe) issued Space Object Re-entry Rules 2026.
- Coverage: Governs **controlled and uncontrolled re-entry of satellites and rocket stages** by Indian operators — debris mitigation standards.
- Alignment: Follows IADC (Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee) guidelines — 25-year post-mission disposal rule.
- Significance: India's first space debris re-entry regulation; part of Space Activities Act framework being developed; supports responsible commercialisation.

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Learn Basics:

- IN-SPACe: Independent nodal agency under Department of Space — authorises, promotes, and regulates private space activities in India (established 2020).
- Space Debris: Defunct satellites, spent rocket stages, and fragments orbiting Earth; over 27,000 tracked objects in orbit pose collision risk to active satellites.
- **Exam point of view:** IN-SPACe = promotional + regulatory body for private space; ISRO = government R&D; NSIL = commercial arm — these three distinctions are tested.

5.2 Solar Rotation Discovery — ARIES Observatory

- Discovery by: Aryabhatta Research Institute of Observational Sciences (ARIES), Nainital — scientists discovered anomalous solar differential rotation pattern.
- Finding: Solar corona rotates **~2.5% faster than the photosphere** at equatorial regions — challenges existing solar rotation models.
- Method: Used data from Solar Dynamics Observatory (NASA) and ARIES's 4-metre International Liquid Mirror Telescope (ILMT).
- Significance: Understanding solar rotation helps predict solar flares and coronal mass ejections (CMEs) that affect satellite communications on Earth.

Learn Basics:

- ARIES: Aryabhatta Research Institute of Observational Sciences — autonomous institute under DST at Nainital, Uttarakhand; operates India's largest optical telescope (3.6 m Devasthal).
- Differential Rotation: The sun does not rotate as a solid body — the equator rotates faster (~25 days) than the poles (~35 days).
- **Exam point of view:** ARIES location (Nainital), ILMT (4 m liquid mirror), and the solar differential rotation concept (equator faster than poles) are all testable.

5.3 Himalayan Chandra Telescope — 25 Years (Hanle, Ladakh)

- Milestone: Himalayan Chandra Telescope (HCT) at Indian Astronomical Observatory (IAO), Hanle, Ladakh completed 25 years of operations.
- Specifications: 2-metre optical telescope at **4,500 metres altitude** — one of the world's highest optical observatories; operated by IIA, Bengaluru.
- Named after: Dr. Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar — Nobel Prize (Physics) laureate 1983, known for Chandrasekhar Limit in stellar physics.
- Discoveries: Contributed to discoveries of 10,000+ gamma-ray burst afterglows, exoplanet transits, and variable star catalogues.

Learn Basics:

- Chandrasekhar Limit: Maximum mass (~1.4 solar masses) a white dwarf star can have before gravitational collapse — discovered by S. Chandrasekhar, Nobel 1983.
- IIA (Indian Institute of Astrophysics): Autonomous research institute under DST, Bengaluru — operates major optical observatories including IAO Hanle.
- **Exam point of view:** HCT at Hanle = 4,500 m altitude; named after S. Chandrasekhar (Nobel 1983); operated by IIA Bengaluru — 'highest telescope' type questions are predictable.

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5.4 Congo Ebola Outbreak — WHO Response

- Outbreak: Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) declared 16th Ebola outbreak — Equateur Province; WHO activated grade 3 emergency response.
- Ebola basics: Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) — caused by Ebola virus; case fatality rate **up to 90%**; transmitted via direct contact with blood/body fluids of infected persons.
- Treatment: rVSV-ZEBOV vaccine (Ervebo) — WHO pre-qualified; deployed in DRC; provides high efficacy against Ebola Zaire strain.
- DRC history: DRC has experienced the most Ebola outbreaks globally — 2018–2020 Eastern DRC outbreak was world's second-largest.

Learn Basics:

- Ebola Virus Disease: Severe haemorrhagic fever caused by Ebola virus — bats are natural reservoirs; outbreaks occur mainly in sub-Saharan Africa.
- WHO Grade 3 Emergency: Highest-level health emergency designation — triggers full WHO emergency response and international resource mobilisation.
- **Exam point of view:** DRC = most frequent Ebola outbreaks; CFR up to 90%; rVSV-ZEBOV vaccine (Ervebo); WHO Grade 3 = highest emergency — all commonly tested.

5.5 Hexavalent Vaccine — India's Universal Immunisation Programme

- Introduction: India introduced Hexavalent Vaccine (Penta + IPV in one shot) into Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP).
- Coverage: One shot protects against **6 diseases: DTP (Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis), Hep-B, Hib, Polio (IPV)** — replaces Pentavalent + separate OPV/IPV schedule.
- Benefit: Reduces number of injections from 5 to 1 per dose — improves compliance, reduces pain, and simplifies cold-chain logistics.
- UIP overview: India's UIP launched 1985 — world's largest immunisation programme; covers 12 diseases; Mission Indradhanush (2014) extended coverage.

Learn Basics:

- UIP (Universal Immunisation Programme): Government programme providing free vaccines to children and pregnant women; managed by Ministry of Health under National Health Mission.
- Pentavalent Vaccine: Protects against 5 diseases (DTP + Hep-B + Hib) — Hexavalent adds IPV (Inactivated Polio Vaccine) as 6th component.
- **Exam point of view:** Hexavalent = 6 diseases in one shot; replaces pentavalent; UIP launched 1985; Mission Indradhanush extended UIP coverage — tested as addition to existing schedule.

5.6 Moderna mFlusiva — First mRNA Influenza Vaccine

- Announcement: Moderna received FDA breakthrough therapy designation for mFlusiva — world's first mRNA-based influenza vaccine.
- Advantage: mRNA technology allows **rapid reformulation (weeks vs months)** to match seasonal flu strains — solves antigenic drift problem.
- Previous mRNA vaccines: Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine (mRNA-1273) was first mRNA vaccine approved for emergency use (2020) — same mRNA platform.
- Influenza burden: Seasonal influenza kills 290,000–650,000 people globally each year (WHO) — current vaccines have 40–60% efficacy.

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Learn Basics:

- mRNA Vaccine: Uses messenger RNA to instruct cells to produce a pathogen's protein, triggering immune response — no live or attenuated virus involved.
- Antigenic Drift: Gradual mutation of influenza virus surface proteins (H and N antigens) requiring annual vaccine reformulation — mRNA vaccines can update faster.
- **Exam point of view:** mRNA platform: COVID-19 vaccine (2020) was first approved mRNA vaccine; mFlusiva would be first mRNA flu vaccine — distinguish between 'first mRNA' and 'first flu vaccine'.

6. ECONOMY NEWS

6.1 SBI AT-1 Perpetual Bonds — Basel III

- Instrument: State Bank of India (SBI) issued Additional Tier-1 (AT-1) Perpetual Bonds worth ₹3,000 crore at 8.34% coupon.
- Basel III basis: AT-1 bonds qualify as **Tier-1 capital under Basel III norms** — improve Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR) without diluting equity.
- Features: Perpetual (no maturity date); discretionary coupon (bank can skip payment if needed); absorb losses before equity shareholders.
- RBI regulation: RBI governs AT-1 bond issuance; AT-1 bonds can be written down or converted to equity if bank's CAR falls below trigger.

Learn Basics:

- Basel III: International banking regulations framework (BIS, 2010) requiring banks to maintain minimum capital buffers — Tier 1 (equity + AT-1) and Tier 2 (subordinated debt).
- AT-1 (Additional Tier-1) Bonds: Perpetual debt instruments that count as bank capital — investor bears higher risk (bail-in clause) in exchange for higher interest.
- **Exam point of view:** AT-1 bonds = perpetual, no maturity date, discretionary coupon; Basel III regulatory basis; CAR trigger for write-down — all are exam points.

6.2 5Rs of Tax Governance — CBDT Framework

- Framework: Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) introduced '5Rs of Tax Governance' framework to improve taxpayer compliance.
- 5Rs: The 5Rs are: **Revenue, Responsibility, Rights, Reliability, and Responsiveness** — guiding principles for tax administration reform.
- Context: Follows Faceless Assessment Scheme (2020) and Vivad se Vishwas scheme — part of taxpayer service improvement.
- CBDT role: CBDT under Finance Ministry — apex body for direct tax policy and administration; oversees Income Tax Department.

Learn Basics:

- CBDT (Central Board of Direct Taxes): Statutory body under Revenue Department, Ministry of Finance — formulates direct tax policies; controls IT Department.
- Faceless Assessment: Digital, jurisdiction-free income tax assessment introduced 2020 — eliminates direct contact between taxpayer and assessing officer.
- **Exam point of view:** CBDT = direct taxes; CBIC = indirect taxes; Faceless Assessment = 2020; the 5Rs are likely tested as 'which is NOT one of the 5Rs' type questions.

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6.3 CPI Base Year Revision — 2012 to 2024

- Revision by: Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) revised CPI base year from 2012 to 2024.
- Reason: Base year revision updates the **consumption basket** to reflect current spending patterns — gig economy, digital services, healthcare now higher-weighted.
- CPI series: CPI-C (Consumer Price Index – Combined) used for RBI's inflation targeting under Flexible Inflation Targeting framework (4% ± 2%).
- Earlier base years: CPI base year has been revised periodically: 1960 → 1982 → 2010 → 2012 → 2024; aligns with new household expenditure survey.

Learn Basics:

- CPI (Consumer Price Index): Measures change in retail prices of a fixed basket of goods and services consumed by a representative household.
- Base Year: Reference year for index calculation (index = 100); changing base year updates the consumption basket to reflect current economic realities.
- **Exam point of view:** CPI base year was 2012 and is now 2024; RBI uses CPI-C for inflation targeting (4% ± 2%); old base year in questions usually relates to WPI vs CPI distinctions.

6.4 RBI Concessional Swap Scheme — $40.8 Billion

- Scheme: RBI extended Concessional Foreign Currency Swap Scheme — banks can access dollars at below-market rates to ease liquidity.
- Size: Total swap facility size: **USD 40.8 billion** — allows banks to swap rupees for dollars at concessional rates for 3-year and 5-year periods.
- Purpose: Improve rupee liquidity in banking system; reduce cost of dollar borrowing; support Indian banks lending to exporters and importers.
- RBI's forex reserves: India's forex reserves stood at USD 690+ billion (August 2026) — RBI uses reserves to defend the rupee and fund swap windows.

Learn Basics:

- Currency Swap: Agreement between two parties to exchange currencies at a fixed rate for a set period — used by central banks to provide liquidity in foreign currency.
- Forex Reserves: Holdings of foreign currencies, gold, SDRs, and IMF reserve position held by RBI — used to manage exchange rate and pay for imports.
- **Exam point of view:** RBI forex reserves (USD 690 billion) and this swap size (USD 40.8 billion) could appear in ranking or threshold questions; understand swap vs repo for Indian context.

6.5 FAO Food Price Index — July 2026

- Report by: UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) — Monthly Food Price Index tracks international prices of food commodities.
- July 2026 reading: FAO Food Price Index: **131.1 points** in July 2026 — up 2.4% from June; driven by cereals and vegetable oils.
- Components: Cereal Price Index, Meat Price Index, Dairy Price Index, Sugar Price Index, Vegetable Oil Index — all five tracked monthly.
- India's concern: Rising global food prices affect India's import inflation (edible oils, pulses) and export competitiveness (rice, wheat).

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Learn Basics:

- FAO (Food and Agriculture Organisation): UN specialised agency headquartered in Rome — leads international efforts to defeat hunger; founded 1945.
- Food Price Index: FAO's composite index of international food commodity prices — covers cereals, meat, dairy, sugar, and vegetable oils.
- **Exam point of view:** FAO HQ = Rome; established 1945; index score (131.1) and its components (5 sub-indices) are testable; India's edible oil import dependence is a recurring economy angle.

6.6 Near-Universal Banking Coverage — India at 99.92%

- Data source: RBI Annual Report 2025–26 — India achieved 99.92% banking penetration at village level.
- Achievement: Only **0.08% villages** remain unbanked — attributed to Jan Dhan Yojana, BC (Business Correspondent) network, and mobile banking.
- Jan Dhan: Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) launched August 28, 2014 — over 54 crore accounts; ₹2.41 lakh crore balance.
- BC network: Over 12 lakh Business Correspondents (BCs) deployed — last-mile banking agents in rural India.

Learn Basics:

- Financial Inclusion: Ensuring access to formal banking services (savings account, credit, insurance, remittance) to all individuals, particularly the poor.
- PMJDY: Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana — launched 2014 to provide universal banking access; accounts include ₹10,000 overdraft facility, RuPay debit card.
- **Exam point of view:** PMJDY launch date (August 28, 2014), accounts opened (54 crore+), and the 99.92% banking penetration figure — three exam-ready statistics from one topic.

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7. STATE NEWS

7.1 Visakhapatnam Port — Marine Products Exports (50.87%)

- Achievement: Visakhapatnam Port Trust (VPT) processed marine product exports worth ₹6,200 crore in FY 2025–26.
- Market share: Visakhapatnam accounts for **50.87% of India's total marine product exports** — largest single port for seafood exports.
- Top export: Vannamei shrimp is the top export species; key destinations — USA, EU, Japan, China.
- Andhra Pradesh: AP produces ~80% of India's vannamei shrimp output; Nellore district is 'shrimp capital'; state ranks 1st in aquaculture.

Learn Basics:

- Visakhapatnam Port: Major port on India's east coast (Andhra Pradesh); one of 13 major ports under Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.
- Vannamei Shrimp (Litopenaeus vannamei): Pacific white shrimp introduced to India — farmed extensively in brackishwater ponds; India is world's top shrimp exporter.
- **Exam point of view:** Visakhapatnam = largest port for marine exports (50.87% share); AP = 80% of vannamei production; Nellore = 'shrimp capital' — all three are testable.

7.2 First Rare Earth Exploration Licence — Rajasthan

- Licence granted to: Ministry of Mines granted India's first Rare Earth Elements (REE) exploration licence to IREL (India) Ltd in Rajasthan.
- Location: Nathdwara district, Rajasthan — estimated reserves of **6.8 million tonnes of REE**, including cerium, lanthanum, neodymium, and praseodymium.
- IREL: Indian Rare Earths Limited — Central PSU under DAE (Department of Atomic Energy); processes monazite sand from coastal beach sands.
- Strategic importance: REE are critical for EVs, wind turbines, defence electronics, and semiconductor manufacturing — reducing import dependence on China.

Learn Basics:

- Rare Earth Elements (REE): Group of 17 metallic elements including lanthanides + scandium and yttrium — critical for clean energy technologies, electronics, and defence.
- IREL (India) Limited: PSU under DAE processing thorium, uranium, and rare earth minerals from Indian beach sands; headquartered in Mumbai.
- **Exam point of view:** India's first REE exploration licence; location (Nathdwara, Rajasthan); IREL under DAE; and REE's role in EVs and clean tech — four testable angles.

7.3 Pithora Painting — Geographical Indication (GI) Tag

- GI Tag awarded to: Pithora Painting — traditional wall art of Bhil and Rathwa tribal communities of Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh.
- Art form features: Vibrant, narrative paintings of **horses, gods, and tribal rituals** on walls and canvases — painted by tribal artists in colours derived from natural materials.
- GI significance: GI tag under Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration & Protection) Act, 1999 — protects traditional knowledge and prevents misuse.
- Related GI tags in news: Other 2026 GI tags: Chanderi fabric (MP), Konark Stone Carving (Odisha), Navara Rice (Kerala) — TNPSC tests GI tags frequently.

Learn Basics:

- Geographical Indication (GI) Tag: Certification linking a product to a specific geographical origin, ensuring it possesses qualities attributable to that origin.
- GI Act, 1999: India's legislation governing GI tags — administered by CGPDTM (Controller General of Patents, Designs and Trade Marks) under DPIIT.
- **Exam point of view:** GI Tag parent law = GI Act 1999; administered by CGPDTM under DPIIT; Pithora Painting community = Bhil and Rathwa (Gujarat/MP) — tribal art GI questions are frequent.

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IMPORTANT DAYS (July 30 – August 10, 2026)

Why Important Days Matter: TNPSC exams regularly test dates, observing bodies, and specific themes.

- July 30: International Day of Friendship (UN) — established by UN General Assembly in 2011 to foster friendship between peoples.
- July 31: World Ranger Day — Theme: 'Rangers: Guardians of a Changing Planet'; honours park rangers protecting wildlife worldwide.
- August 1: World Lung Cancer Day — Theme: 'Together Through Lung Cancer'; lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death worldwide.
- August 1: World Wide Web Day — Commemorates Tim Berners-Lee's invention of the World Wide Web in 1989 at CERN.
- August 1: World Fintech Day — Celebrates advances in financial technology, digital payments, blockchain, and financial inclusion.
- August 1–7: World Breastfeeding Week — Theme: 'Breastfeeding for a Sustainable Start in Life: Strengthen What Works'; initiated by WHO and UNICEF.
- August 2: Friendship Day in India — Observed on first Sunday of August; distinct from International Friendship Day (July 30).
- August 3: Indian Organ Donation Day — Commemorates India's first successful heart transplant at AIIMS, New Delhi (1994); promoted by NOTTO.
- August 4: International Clouded Leopard Day — Raises awareness for Vulnerable (IUCN) clouded leopard; state animal of Meghalaya and Mizoram.
- August 4: National Bone and Joint Day — Theme: 'Healthy Bones, Healthy Joints, Healthier India'; observed by Indian Orthopaedic Association (IOA) since 2012.
- August 7: National Handloom Day — Commemorates launch of Swadeshi Movement on August 7, 1905; observed since 2015 to promote handloom weavers.
- August 7: National Javelin Day — Observed by Athletics Federation of India (AFI) since 2021; marks Neeraj Chopra's Olympic gold at Tokyo on August 7, 2021.
- August 9: International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples — Theme: 'Honouring Indigenous Midwives: Safeguarding Life and Well-being'; proclaimed by UNGA in 1994.

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PERSONS & AWARDS

- Fields Medal 2026: Four mathematicians received the Fields Medal (mathematics equivalent of Nobel Prize) — awarded every 4 years to mathematicians under 40.
- Murali Sreeshankar: Won silver medal in Long Jump at Commonwealth Games (CWG) 2026 — India's top long jump specialist.
- Tejaswin Shankar: Won bronze medal in Decathlon at CWG 2026 — first Indian to win a medal in Decathlon at Commonwealth Games.
- Asmita Dey & Harsh Singh: Both won gold medals in Judo at CWG 2026 — India's first judo gold at Commonwealth Games in 2026.
- Neeraj Chopra: Won silver medal in Javelin at CWG 2026 — defending champion and Olympic gold medallist (Tokyo 2020, Paris 2024).
- Mirabai Chanu: Won her 3rd Commonwealth Games gold medal in weightlifting — most successful Indian weightlifter at CWG level.
- India at CWG 2026: Finished 4th overall with 39 medals (13 Gold, 15 Silver, 11 Bronze) — held in Glasgow, Scotland.
- Annapurni Subramaniam: Awarded COSPAR Vikram Sarabhai Medal 2026 — Director of IIA Bengaluru; 4th Indian and first Indian woman to receive this award.

- Varsha Ashok Aglawe: Appointed 54th Director General of Geological Survey of India (GSI) — first woman DG in GSI's 175-year history.
- P. Pechiyammal & Govindhammal: Received Dr. M.S. Swaminathan Award for their contribution to traditional seed conservation in Tamil Nadu.
- 12 Rat-Hole Miners: Awarded Sarvottam Jeevan Raksha Padak — India's highest civilian gallantry award for life-saving — for rescuing 41 miners from Silkyara Tunnel, Uttarakhand (2023).
- Karthikeyan Lanka: Received NASI Young Scientist Award 2026 — National Academy of Sciences India; for research in atmospheric science.
- Nathan Thomas: Recognised as world's youngest male professor at 18 years and 346 days — appointed at University of Science and Technology, Pennsylvania, USA.
- Pingali Venkayya: 150th birth anniversary observed — designed the national flag of India (tricolour); born August 2, 1876.
- Dr. Gunther von Hagens: German anatomist who invented Plastination (body preservation technique used in Body Worlds exhibitions) died at 81.

Professor Academy